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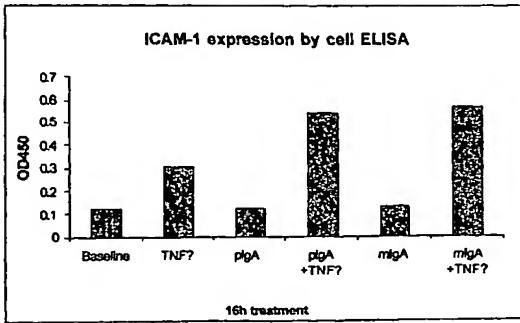
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(54) Title: MODULATION OF MESENCHYMAL CELLS VIA IGA-RECEPTORS

- IgA increases TNF α -induced ICAM-1 expression on RA synovial fibroblasts



(57) **Abstract:** IgA receptors, including a polymeric immunoglobulin receptor (pIgR) and a Fc α R, have been found on smooth muscle cells, synovial fibroblast cells and on both synovial and endothelial cells in synovial tissues from patients with arthritis. Incubation of smooth muscle cells or tissue with pIgA increases cytosolic calcium and alters the contractile state. Incubation of synovial cells with IgA modulates the inflammatory responses of these cells. The invention relates to methods of modulating calcium signalling and/or contractility of mesenchymal cells, as well as modulating (preferably inhibiting) the inflammatory responses of mesenchymal cells, methods of treating inflammatory conditions (such as asthma and arthritis), methods of drug delivery to mesenchymal cells and methods of detecting conditions associated with IgA receptors on mesenchymal cells.

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